

Session 1

Use these questions to talk to your child about the message of Philippians. Then consider taking the So What? challenge to incorporate this session's message into your own life alongside your child's.

PHILIPPIANS
WHERE does
Joy come from?



Read Again

Philippians 1:1-2

"From Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ. To all of God's holy people in Christ Jesus who live in Philippi." (Philippians 1:1, ICB)

1. **How many times does the word "fun" appear in the Bible?** (Just once.)
2. **What is in the Bible a lot that is even better than fun?** (Joy.)
3. **What is joy?** (Deep happy. Hug happy, not cookie happy.)
4. **Who wrote Philippians...and to whom did they write it?** (Paul wrote Philippians. He wrote it to the Christians in Philippi.)
5. **Have you ever ridden a ride at an amusement park all by yourself? How was that different than riding with friends?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Practice teaching your child about joy. Ask, "What does the Bible tell us is better than fun?" and every time he or she responds with "joy" give them a hug.

For Grade Schoolers

Each day this week, when you hug your child remind them, "God gives us hug happy joy."

For You

Where do you look for joy? Does your child see Christ as your joy? How should your answer frame the way you approach this study of Philippians?

Session 2

Use these questions to talk to your child about the message of Philippians. Then consider taking the So What? challenge to incorporate this session's message into your own life alongside your child's.

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Read Again

Philippians 1:3–6

"I always pray for all of you with joy." (Philippians 1:4, ICB)

- 1. What is the first thing Paul talks about that brings him joy?** (Remembering his friends in Philippi. Remembering the people he loves, who love him.)
- 2. What is the second thing that brings Paul joy?** (Seeing people meet Jesus and become children of God.)
- 3. What is the third thing that brings Paul joy?** (Knowing that God's promises will come true. He and his friends will find their "happily ever after" with God.)
- 4. Can the Roman guards take away the things that bring Paul joy?** (No. When Paul remembers these things, he can have joy, even in prison.)
- 5. If you thought about these things when you were having bad days, how do you think it might change your attitude?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Say or sing "God gives us a happily ever after" with your child three times.

For Grade Schoolers

Ask your child to list their closest friends. Once they do, talk about what life would be like without those friends and how they are a blessing from God to create joy.

For You

Who among your friends has yet to meet Jesus and become a child of God? Commit to regularly praying for them that God would soften their hearts to the message of His gospel.

Session 3

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Read Again

Philippians 1:7–11

“This is my prayer for you: that your love will grow more and more; that you will have knowledge and understanding with your love.” (Philippians 1:9, ICB)

- 1. Does working extra hard get Paul extra blessing from God?** (No. All God's children get all of God's blessing.)
- 2. Then why does Paul work extra hard?** (Because it brings him joy. Paul loves seeing people meet God.)
- 3. Paul wants us to grow in...what?** (Love! Love is the big thing in the Bible.)
- 4. Paul also prays that our lives will be filled with fruit. Does he mean apples and bananas?** (No, he means patience, contentment, joy, and love.)
- 5. Do you think God will like you more if you work extra hard? What if God really likes you just the way you are? How would that make you feel?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Take a handful of building blocks and set them in a line individually. Point to them one by one while asking your child, “How much blessing do God's children get? One? Two?” and so on. When you get to the end of the line, say with your child, “All of God's blessing” and push the blocks together into a pile.

For Grade Schoolers

Talk about love together. Ask your child what he or she loves and discuss what it would look like to love in ways that honor God.

For You

As you consider the way you approach your work, your family, your marriage, and so on can you identify ways that you're working for extra blessing from God? Spend time this week confessing that to God and asking Him to give you rest in the fullness of His grace.

Session 4

Use these questions to talk to your child about the message of Philippians. Then consider taking the So What? challenge to incorporate this session's message into your own life alongside your child's.

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Read Again

Philippians 1:12–18

"I am in prison because I am a believer in Christ. All the palace guards and everyone else knows this." (Philippians 1:13, ICB)

- 1. Since Paul is in prison, does that mean he can't tell people about God anymore?** (No way! Paul is telling everyone in prison about God. Even the guards!)
- 2. Since Paul has been thrown in prison, are other Christians more scared, or more brave?** (They're becoming more brave.)
- 3. Why would Paul being in prison make other Christians more brave?** (Because they see that God is with Paul, even in prison. Bad things aren't as scary when we know God will be with us.)
- 4. What has Paul learned about God and bad things?** (That God can take bad things and turn them into something good.)
- 5. Do you believe God is with you? Even when bad things happen?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Stand in a room with your child while holding hands. Then turn off the light and say, "Can you still feel me with you?" After he or she responds, turn the light back on and talk about how God never leaves us. He is always with us.

For Grade Schoolers

Talk with your child about times when God has taken bad things in their life and turned them into something good. Encourage your child to tell that story to someone this week, like Paul did with prison guards.

For You

Reflect on the ways God has used bleak circumstances in your life for His good. Ask Him to renew your sense of confidence in His presence at all times.

Session 5

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Read Again

Philippians 1:19–26

“The thing I want and hope for is that I will not fail Christ in anything. I hope that I will have the courage now, as always, to show the greatness of Christ in my life here on earth. I want to do that if I die or if I live.” (Philippians 1:20, ICB)

- 1. What does the word “rejoice” mean?** (To feel or show great joy. Like yelling, “Hooray!”)
- 2. It was possible that the Romans would kill Paul. Did he know that?** (Yes he did.)
- 3. Was Paul scared of dying?** (No he wasn't. If he was alive, his life was all about Jesus. If he did, he'd get to be with Jesus! Both were good!)
- 4. If we really believe what God has promised, will we live more bravely, or less bravely?** (More bravely! When we trust God, no matter what happens, we can be fearless!)
- 5. Would you like to live your life without any fear? Would you like to be brave? How could God's promises help you live that kind of life?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Read this passage out loud again with your child and have him or her yell “Hooray!” every time you say the word “Christ” to remember that He is the reason for our joy.

For Grade Schoolers

Ask your child to name the bravest person he or she can think of. Then talk about the bravery of Jesus and what He accomplished by laying down His life and rising from the dead. Remind him or her that it's those truths that give us ultimate bravery in life.

For You

Where are you experiencing fear today? Where do you need bravery? Confess to the Lord and ask Him to replace your fear with courageous obedience.

Session 6

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Read Again

Philippians 1:27–30

“Be sure that you live in a way that brings honor to the Good News of Christ. Then whether I come and visit you or am away from you, I will hear good things about you. I will hear that you continue strong with one purpose and that you work together as a team for the faith of the Good News.” (Philippians 1:27, ICB)

- 1. How do we “honor” the Good News?** (When we live new lives, when people see how God’s power can change us, we show that the Good News is true.)
- 2. What does it mean when Paul says we are “saved”?** (It means we are saved from the bad things we do, and we get to be with God forever.)
- 3. What does it mean to be “lost”?** (The opposite of being saved. Being away from God forever.)
- 4. Paul says suffering for Jesus brings glory to Him. How?** (It shows how much we love Jesus, and it gives God the chance to show up with us and do amazing things!)
- 5. When bad things happen to you, what if, instead of complaining, you prayed that God would show up and do something amazing?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Say or sing with your child, “I was lost, but now I’m saved!”

For Grade Schoolers

Ask how your child feels about the truth that Jesus saves us from the bad things we do. Use that time to talk about how the work of Jesus allows us to treat others with the same kind of mercy, patience, and kindness.

For You

How do you tend to react to bad circumstances in your life? Resolve going forward to face frustrating or difficult times with prayer instead of complaints.

Session 7

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Read Again

Philippians 2:1–4

“When you do things, do not let selfishness or pride be your guide. Be humble and give more honor to others than to yourselves. Do not be interested only in your own life, but be interested in the lives of others.” (Philippians 2:3–4, ICB)

- 1. What gives Paul so much joy he says he'll almost burst?** (That Christians have the same thoughts, share the same love, and have one mind and purpose.)
- 2. What does it mean to have “the mind of Christ”?** (We see things the way Jesus sees things, think the way Jesus thinks, and act the way Jesus acts.)
- 3. And how is that? How does Jesus see, think, and act?** (With love.)
- 4. What kind of love? Hugs and kisses?** (No. Love that puts other people first, instead of putting ourselves first.)
- 5. If everyone lived this way and put each other first, how would that change your school? Your neighborhood? The world?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Tell your child that you need to dance or you'll burst! Spend some time dancing together. Then talk about how loving Jesus gives us the same kind of feeling.

For Grade Schoolers

Talk to your child about the kind of love discussed in this session and give them an opportunity to put others first. Maybe he or she could wash the dishes for a parent, share a toy with a sibling, or encourage a friend who's having a bad day.

For You

Who do you struggle to serve? What are the obstacles that keep you from doing so? Spend time reflecting on the way Christ has extended His love to you and ask Him to change your heart so that you can model His love for those who make it hard to love.

Session 8

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PHILIPPIANS
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Read Again

Philippians 2:5–18

“Do everything without complaining or arguing.” (Philippians 2:14, ICB)

- 1. To follow Jesus is to learn to...what?** (Think and act like Jesus.)
- 2. What does it mean to work on our salvation with “fear and trembling”?** (It means to take it seriously. God has given us an amazing gift!)
- 3. Why does Paul compare us to bright stars in a dark sky?** (Because living like Jesus really makes us stand out in a selfish world.)
- 4. Why isn't Paul afraid to die?** (Because the things that bring him joy can't be taken away! When we follow Jesus, no one can steal our joy!)
- 5. Picture yourself in your school or in your neighborhood, walking around and glowing like a star! Do you like that idea?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Play a game of “Follow the Leader” with your child asking them to mimic every move you make. Then explain that's how we are to follow Jesus.

For Grade Schoolers

Pick a night this week to look at the stars with your child. As you do, talk to him or her about ways we can shine as Christians.

For You

Where has God given you opportunities to shine for His glory in your family? Your neighborhood? Your workplace? Choose at least one way to practically “shine” over the course of this next week and act on it.

Session 9

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Read Again

Philippians 3:1–16

"All I want is to know Christ and the power of his rising from death. I want to share in Christ's sufferings and become like him in his death."
(Philippians 3:10, ICB)

- 1. What was Paul most proud of before he met Jesus?** (How good he was at following all the rules.)
- 2. Rather than being good at following rules, Paul has a new goal. What is it?** (To be like Jesus.)
- 3. What does the word "Christian" mean?** ("Little Christ"...or "Christ One." Someone who is like Jesus.)
- 4. Paul says he's looking forward to his prize. What prize is he talking about?** (New life. "Forever life" with God.)
- 5. Did you know you can have the same prize Paul was so excited about? And you can't earn it. It's a gift! Have you ever asked God to give you that gift?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Make up a simple song with your child and sing together about how you want "forever life with God" as your prize.

For Grade Schoolers

Ask your child to recall the best gift they've ever received. Talk with him or her about what it means to receive forever life with God as a free gift.

For You

As you think on your life, are you still proud of your obedience to the rules? Does your pride conflict with your love for Christ in this way? Make a conscious effort to surrender that to God this week and walk in His freely given grace.

Session 10

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Read Again

Philippians 3:17–21

“But our homeland is in heaven, and we are waiting for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, to come from heaven.” (Philippians 3:20, ICB)

- 1. What's the best way to learn to live like Jesus?** (Watch other people who have been following Jesus for a long, long time.)
- 2. Paul says for some people, their “God is their belly.” What does that mean?** (They don't live to please God, they live to please themselves.)
- 3. Paul and the apostles are focused not on what they want, but...what?** (What God wants. They are focused on Jesus and His love.)
- 4. One day Jesus will change our bodies to be like His body. What does that mean?** (We won't want things that aren't good for us, and we'll never get old or die.)
- 5. Do you ever want things you know aren't good for you? What if Jesus could change that? Would you want him to?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Play “Simon Says” with your child, but change it to “Jesus Says.” Have him or her mirror different actions and then talk about why it's good for us to do what Jesus says.

For Grade Schoolers

Have a conversation about wants and desires. Ask your child about what he or she wants most out of life and whether or not they are focused on Jesus and His love. Pray together for God to shape both of your hearts for Him.

For You

As you watched this session, did the Holy Spirit convict you of any ways in which you desire things that are not good for you? Confess those to God this week and ask Him to replace those desires with desires for what is good.

Session 11

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Read Again

Philippians 4:4–7

“Be full of joy in the Lord always. I will say again, be full of joy.”
(Philippians 4:4, ICB)

- 1. Did Jesus come to take our fun away?** (No. Jesus came so we could have lives filled with joy, love, peace, patience...all the good things!)
- 2. Why does Paul ask us to be gentle with each other?** (Because we're part of the family of God. We try hard not to hurt each other, which takes gentleness!)
- 3. Is Paul teaching us how to get stuff from God?** (No. Paul is teaching us how to get peace. The peace of God is better than stuff!)
- 4. What does Paul say we should do with all our worries?** (Give them to God. Let God worry about them.)
- 5. What do you worry about a lot? Could you give those worries to God, and trust Him to take care of you?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Build a small structure out of blocks and talk to your child about what it means to be gentle. Like the structure, God is making each of us part of His family and we need to be gentle so that we don't hurt one another (or knock over the structure).

For Grade Schoolers

Talk to your child about gentleness. Brainstorm a few ways for him or her to be gentle to others this week—an encouraging remark, a hug, letting someone else go first, etc.

For You

What are you worried about? How does worry affect your daily life? Begin each day this week with a moment of being still before the Lord and bringing your worries to Him. Ask that He would care for you and grant you peace.

Session 12

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PHILIPPIANS
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Read Again

Philippians 4:8–9

“Brothers, continue to think about the things that are good and worthy of praise. Think about the things that are true and honorable and right and pure and beautiful and respected.” (Philippians 4:8, ICB)

- 1. What is this whole section of Philippians about?** (How to live. It's about what should come out of our lives if we're following Jesus.)
- 2. Paul tells us to think about things that are good and pure and beautiful. Does that mean we have to ignore bad news?** (No. We should never ignore it when others are hurting.)
- 3. Then what does Paul mean?** (He means when we look for examples of how to live, look for examples that are good, pure, and beautiful.)
- 4. Is it wrong to read stories where bad people do bad things?** (Only if the bad things are being called “good,” or good things are being called “bad.”)
- 5. Can you think of a movie where someone does bad things? Did the movie say those things were “bad” or “good”?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Make up a simple song with the line, “Let's think about what is good and beautiful,” and sing it with your child.

For Grade Schoolers

Work with your child to memorize Philippians 4:8. Encourage him or her to use it as a reminder to think on what God tells us is good, pure, and beautiful.

For You

Who are your examples? Who do you look to in order to learn how best to follow Jesus? Spend some time considering whether or not you dwell on what is good, pure, and beautiful. And make changes where necessary.

Session 13

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Read Again

Philippians 4:10–13

"I can do all things through Christ because he gives me strength."
(Philippians 4:10–13, ICB)

- 1. What's one way to help figure out the meaning to a verse?** (Read the verses around it to see what the author was talking about before and after.)
- 2. When Paul says he can do anything through Christ, does he mean he can fly? Or turn into the Hulk?** (No. Paul means he can do anything God wants him to do.)
- 3. What was God helping Paul do when he wrote this letter?** (God was giving Paul the strength to be happy in any situation.)
- 4. Is that the only thing God can help us to?** (No. God will help us do anything He has asked us to do.)
- 5. It sounds fun to think of God helping us do anything we want to do. But can you think of ways it could be trouble?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Teach your child the phrase, "With Jesus, I can do all God wants me to."

For Grade Schoolers

Have a conversation about the happiness Paul talks about in this passage. What are some recent situations that have made your child unhappy? Talk to him or her about how God can give them strength to be happy in every situation, even that difficult one.

For You

Life is tough. There's no getting around that fact, but Paul's contentment isn't meant to be a truth for children alone. Where do you struggle to experience the kind of happiness we discussed in this session? Ask God to continue shaping your heart to rely on Him at all times for contentment.

Session 14

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PHILIPPIANS
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Read Again

Philippians 4:19–20

“My God will use his wonderful riches in Christ Jesus to give you everything you need. Glory to our God and Father forever and ever! Amen.”
(Philippians 4:19–20, ICB)

- 1. Why did Paul need his friends in Philippi to help take care of him?** (In ancient prisons, sometimes they wouldn't feed you or take care of you. Friends had to do that.)
- 2. Is Paul promising that God will give us everything we need? Everything we ask Him for?** (No. Even Paul didn't have everything he needed all the time.)
- 3. Then what is Paul trying to teach us?** (To trust God. To tell God what we're worried about, and give those worries to Him.)
- 4. What will God give us in return?** (Peace, love, and joy. What we really need most of all!)
- 5. Have you ever said, “But I NEED this!” about something you really didn't need at all? Why do you think it's so hard to tell the difference between what we need, and what we want?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Practice shouting, “God gives me everything I really need!”

For Grade Schoolers

Ask your child to describe a time when he or she had to trust. What did he or she learn from the experience? What would it look like for him or her to trust God in the same way?

For You

Have you felt God saying “no” to certain prayers lately? Is it possible that you're asking for things you want when He wants to give you what you need? Ask the Holy Spirit to give you insight and direction in your life in the days ahead.

Session 15

Use these questions to talk to your child about the message of Philippians. Then consider taking the So What? challenge to incorporate this session's message into your own life alongside your child's.

PHILIPPIANS
WHERE does joy come from?



Read Again

Philippians 4:21–23

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.” (Philippians 4:21–23, ICB)

- 1. Where does joy come from?** (From relationships with friends and with God. From helping other people meet God. From knowing that God's promises will come true.)
- 2. What does it mean to have “the mind of Christ”?** (It means we see, think, and act like Jesus. With love.)
- 3. How do we learn to live like Jesus?** (We watch people who have been living like Jesus for a long, long time.)
“I can do all things through Christ because He gives me strength,” means...what? (God will give me the strength to do anything He asks me to do.)
- 4. The world says we need all of our problems solved to be happy. Paul says all we need to be happy is a relationship with God. What do you think?**

So What?

For Toddlers

Bookend this series by reminding your child about joy. Ask, “What does the Bible tell us is better than fun?” and every time he or she responds with “joy” cheer and give them a hug.

For Grade Schoolers

Ask your child to identify 2–3 people who love Jesus and talk to him or her about what stands out about the faith of those individuals. Talk about how your child could model the faith of those he or she admires.

For You

Find a moment to be still before God and thank Him for the relationship He has given you through Christ. Remind yourself, as Paul says, all we need to be happy is a relationship with God.